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TAGS: [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: FM KHATIB ON IRAQ NEIGHBORS' CONFERENCE IN TEHRAN

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2314

[B](#). STATE 107327
[C](#). AMMAN 4879

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

(C) Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdelilah Al-Khatib told Ambassador July 5 that he had opposed actively the convening of an Iraq Neighbors Conference in Tehran and had no desire to attend it. He had put forward a number of ideas on how to avoid this, such as a meeting on the margins of the OIC Baku ministerial, but he said the Iraqi government had opposed each alternative. Khatib noted that Iraqi FM Zebari made clear to him and others that Iraq supported the Tehran event and that Zebari would attend, putting the governments of Iraq's other neighbors in a difficult position. He pointed out that Saudi FM Saud al-Feisal and Egyptian FM Ahmad Abul-Ghaith are going, as are the Turks and the Syrians. Khatib said Jordan could not absent itself, and he believed he needed to be in Tehran in order to push for the right results, specifically a call against outside interference in Iraqi political affairs. Khatib was also fearful that if he did not attend, the Iranians would exploit his absence publicly as a demonstration of who Iraq's "real friends" were.

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Hale